

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSM-05 AID-05 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-02 SP-02
STR-04 TRSE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 L-03 PRS-01 PA-02
USIA-15 /085 W

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R 311517Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1181
INFO USDA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY BERN

UNCLAS CAIRO 1809

USDA FOR GAS/FMD/F&V.
LONDON USEC THE HAGUE AND BERN FOR AGATTACHES.

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, EEC, EG, US
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN PURCHASE OF SEED POTATOES FROM MAINE.

REFS: (A) BERN 5255 (B) TOFAS 74.

1. AGATTACHE CARIO WAS CONTACTED 1/28/77 BY MR BECHIR ODA-
BACHI OF BONDI AND HERZIG AG, LANGENTHAL, SWITZERLAND, WHOSE
FIRM ARRANGED TRIAL SHIPMENT OF SEED POTATOES FROM MAINE TO
EGYPT. MR. ODABACHI WAS QUITE CONCERNED THAT SALE WAS IN
JEOPARDY FOR REASOONS STATED BELOW.

2. ACCORDING TO ODABACHI, EUROPEAN COOPERATIVE WHICH HAS BEEN
SOLE SOURCE OF SEED POTATOES TO EGYPT IN RECENT PAST SUBSTANTIALLY
RAISED PRICE THIS YEAR AND INFORMED GOE IT WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO
SUPPLY QUANTITY REQUESTED. AT THAT POINT, GOE LOOKED FOR OTHER
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SOURCES
AND MADE PURCHASE FROM MAINE. WHEN EUROPEAN GROUP LEARNED OF
GOE INQUIRY TO US SOURCES, THEY REPORTEDLY
LOWERED PRICE AND OFFERED TO SUPPLY FULL AMOUNT NEEDED BY GOE
BUT PURCHASE FROM MAINE HAD ALREADY BEEN CONFIRMED.

3. AS REPORTED REFTELS, ONLY EGYPTIAN PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATES

ARE ACCEPTABLE TO GOE AND 2 EGYPTIAN INSPECTORS EXAMINED AND APPROVED SHIPMENT IN THE US. POTATOES WERE ALSO INSPECTED FOLLOWING RECENT ARRIVAL IN ALEXANDRIA AND 500 TONS HAVE ALREADY BEEN DISTRIBUTED.

4. AFTER PURCHASE FROM MAINE, GOE RECEIVED NOTICE FROM BENNETT OF LONDON (NOT CERTAIN WHETHER THAT IS NAME OF COMPANY OR INDIVIDUAL), REPORTEDLY ON BEHALF OF EUROPEAN COOPERATIVE THAT WAS PREVIOUSLY SOLE SUPPLIER, TO EFFECT THAT USE OF AMERICAN SEED POTATOES WOULD JEOPARDIZE FUTURE EUROPEAN PURCHASES OF EGYPTIAN POTATOES FOR CONSUMPTION. THREAT WAS BASED ON CONTENTION THAT COLORADO BEETLE AND POTATO RING ROT ARE FOUND IN US BUT NOT IN EGYPT OR EUROPE.

5. FURTHER DISTRIBUTION OF US SEED POTATOES WAS SUBJECT OF SEVERAL HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS DURING WEEKEND OF 1/29-30 IN EGYPTIAN MINAG. AGATTACHE ATTEMPTED CONTACT MINISTER OF STATE HUSSEIN SEVERAL TIMES OVER WEEKEND BUT UNABLE GET IN TOUCH AS LATTER WAS ATTENDING SESSIONS OF PEOPLES ASSEMBLY 1/29 -AND A FUNERAL ON 1/30.

6. MINISTER HUSSEIN CALLED AGATTACHE ON 1/31 AND REPORTED THAT GOE HAD EXAMINED MATTER, FOUND US POTATOES COMPLETELY ACCEPTABLE, AND WAS RELEASING BALANCE OF SHIPMENT FOR DISTRIBUTION. HE FURTHER STATED THAT TRAILS HAVE ALREADY BEEN RUN ON KENBET VARIETY FROM MAINE AND IT HAS PRODUCED YIELD 10 PERCENT ABOVE THAT OF DUTCH ALPHA VARIETY PREVIOUSLY USED, GOE CONSIDERS MAINE UNCLASSIFIED

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KENBETS THE BEST SEED POTATOES THEY HAVE HAD, AND 1 TON EACH OF 4 OTHER AMERICAN VARIETIES HAVE BEEN PURCHASED FOR TEST PURPOSES. ODABACHI IS AWARE OF OUTCOME ALSO.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: AMEMBASSY CAIRO WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING FULL IDENTITY OF EUROPEAN COOPERATIVE FROM EITHER USEC OR THE HAGUE, AND IDENTITY OF BENNETT FROM LONDON, IF AVAILABLE.

5. COMMENT: WHILE USG HAS SUFFERED SETBACKS IN PAST DEALINGS WITH EC ON QUOTE THE CHICKEN WAR UNQUOTE, VARIABLE LEVIES, ETC., WE CAN PERHAPS CLAIM A MINOR VICTORY IN THE QUOTE SEED POTATO SKIRMISH UNQUOTE. PERHAPS BENNETT THREAT IS IDLE TALK. HOWEVER, IN CONTEXT OF OUR EFFORTS TO ASSIST EGYPTIAN ECONOMY, RECOMMEND DEPT. INSTRUCT OUR EC POSTS TO BE ALERT TO ANY SUGGESTION EC COUNTRIES MAY BE DISCRIMINATING AGAINST EGYPTIAN POTATOES BECAUSE THEY ARE FROM AMERICAN SEED STOCK AND, IF ANY SUCH DISCRIMINATION DEVELOPS TO MAKE APPROPRIATE REPRESENTATIONS. EILTS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 31-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CAIRO01809
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770034-0346
Format: TEL
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977014/aaaaacvj.tel
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Subject: EGYPTIAN PURCHASE OF SEED POTATOES FROM MAINE.
TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, EG, US, XG, EEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
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